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***Philonthus atratus* (Gravenhorst) (Col.: Staphylinidae) new to both Worcestershire (v.c. 37) and Gloucestershire (v.c. 33)**

Philonthus atratus (Grav.) is a rare, striking, hygrophilus beetle. On 1.viii.1987 I made my first acquaintance with it at Beckford, Worcestershire (SO 93) at the margin of a shallow pool on glutinous, entirely unvegetated clay. Disturbed from beneath a stone, it ran rapidly, with its body well elevated on scarcely flexed legs. At about the same time *P. atratus* turned up at another site near Broadway, Worcestershire (SP 03) on organic mud at the edge of reedswamp.

On 15.vi.1989 *P. atratus* was again observed at the Beckford site, where incidentally, on 24.vi.1989, an inland *Bembidion minimum* (Fabricius) was encountered. Finally *P. atratus* was observed in Gloucestershire on 4.vii.1989 on minerogenic mud by shallow pools at Bishop's Cleeve (SO 92). It is noted that all of these records relate to basic water bodies flanking the Jurassic scarp of midland England. *P. atratus* demands further study due to its specialised ecology and preference for a habitat that can be lost with dramatic speed. Its sporadic occurrences hardly constitute populations, and it may be that it is dispersing from more major foci elsewhere:— P.F. WHITEHEAD, Moor Leys, Little Comberton, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3EP.

[I have heard that *P. atratus* occurred freely over a number of years on the muddy edges of a pond at the Welsh Harp, Hendon, Middlesex, up to about 1940 when the habitat became unsuitable or more likely was destroyed. Only sporadic later finds are known to me, from Compton Bishop (N. Somerset), and the New Forest.— A.A.ALLEN.]